

Home

About

What's new

Contact us

Subscriber services

Help

My OED (personal profile):

Sign in

Create profile

OED

Oxford English Dictionary

The definitive record of the English language

Quick search

Find word in dictionary

Search

Lost for Words?

Advanced search

Help

Browse:

Dictionary

Categories

Timelines

Sources

Historical Thesaurus

My entries (1)

My searches (0)

Jump to:

Entry

Date

inconsiderate, adj. ...

c1400

inconsiderately, adv.

c1400

inconsiderateness, n.

1591

inconsideration, n.

1526

inconsiderative, adj.

1684

inconsidered, adj.

a1631

inconsidering, adj.

1685

inconsistence, n.

1643

inconsistency, n.

1647

inconsistent, adj. a...

1646

inconsistently, adv.

1665

inconsistently, n.

1647

inconsistent, adj.

1660

inconsisting, adj.

1658

inconsolable, adj.

1596

inconsolate, adj.

1882

inconsonance, n.

1811

inconsonancy, n.

1650

inconsonant, adj.

1658

Help on Dictionary Entry

Print

Save

Email

Cite

inconsistent, *adj.* and *n.*

Text size:

A

A

View as: Outline

Full entry

Quotations: Show all

Hide all

Pronunciation:

/ɪnkənˈsɪstənt/

Forms:

Also 16–17 -ant.

Etymology:

< IN- *prefix*3+ CONSISTENT *adj.*; compare modern French *inconsistent*.

A. *adj.* Not consistent.

I.

1. Of a substance: Without consistence or firmness, of incoherent nature. *rare*. *arch*.

1677

N. GREW

Solution of Salts ii. §10

If the Particles of Water were themselves Fluid or Inconsistent and Alterable.

1718

J. CHAMBERLAYNE tr. B. Nieuwentijdt

Relig. Philosopher i. xi. x. 207

The whole Matter [is] so soft and inconsistent, that it can hardly bear touching with the Hands.

1860

J. RUSKIN

Mod. Painters V. 159

The parts of a crystal are consistent, but of dust, inconsistent.

(Hide quotations)

II.

2. Not consisting; not agreeing in substance, spirit, or form; not in keeping; not consonant or in accordance; at variance, discordant, incompatible, incongruous.

a. Said of one thing in relation to another; const. *with*, †rarely *to*.

1646

SIR T. BROWNE

Pseudodoxia Epidemica i. viii. 30

It containeth impossibilities and things inconsistent with truth.

1664

Rec. Colony Rhode Island (1857) II. 64

Whether ther be any lawes that are inconsistent to the present government.

1729

BP. J. BUTLER

15 Serm. (ed. 2) ix. 165

Resentment is not inconsistent with Good-will.

1836

J. GILBERT

Christian Atonem. viii. 358

The benevolence of God..is not inconsistent with his determination to punish.

1870

W. S. JEVONS

Elem. Lessons Logic ix. 76

The proposition, A, then, is inconsistent with both E and O.

1880

S. HAUGHTON

Six Lect. Physical Geogr. iii. 163 (*note*),

Three combinations..give results inconsistent with the others.

(Hide quotations)

b. Said of two or more things, in relation to each other.

Thesaurus »

This entry has not yet been fully updated (first published 1900).

Publication history

Entry profile

Previous version

In other dictionaries:

inconsistent: quick current definition in Oxford Dictionaries Online

http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/93864[4/15/2014 2:12:43 PM]

- 1656 J. BRAMHALL *Replic. to Bishop of Chalcedon* v. 227 Thus he confoundeth Papall and Patriarchall Power, making things inconsistent to be one and the same thing.
- 1657 O. CROMWELL *Speech* 21 Apr. in *Writings & Speeches* (1947) IV. 490 And it is a pitiful fancy,..to think they are inconsistent. They may consist.
- a1704 J. LOCKE *Posthumous Wks.* (1706) 179 Can the same unextended indivisible Substance have different, nay inconsistent and opposite Modifications at the same time?
- 1857 F. D. MAURICE *Epist. St. John* xv. 247 Are these two passages inconsistent?
- 1875 ABP. W. THOMSON *Outl. Laws of Thought* (new ed.) §124. 256 Two or more inconsistent views..may be formed at the same time.

(Hide quotations)

†c. Applied to a benefice incapable of being held together with a fellowship. *Obs.* [Thesaurus »](#) [Categories »](#)

- 1690 N. LUTTRELL *Diary* in *Brief Hist. Relation State Affairs* (1857) II. 85 Dr. Hern..having a liveing at St. Anns in Westminster, the bishop declared it inconsistent with his fellowship.
- 1691 *Case of Exeter-Coll.* 51 The Statutes of Exeter-College..would very imprudently have made that distinction betwixt Benefices consistent and inconsistent.

(Hide quotations)

3. Wanting in harmony between its different parts or elements; self-contradictory; involving inconsistency. Said of a single thing, or of action including two or more courses. [Thesaurus »](#)

- 1651 R. BAXTER *Plain Script. Proof* 277 For his humanity to reign actually, and to suffer at the same time, is inconsistent
- 1658 J. BRAMHALL *Consecr. Bys.* vi. 134 It had deserved more credit then this silly, improbable, inconsistent Relation.
- 1774 J. BRYANT *New Syst.* I. 306 All which in time..gave rise to a most inconsistent system of Polytheism.
- 1856 J. A. FROUDE *Hist. Eng.* (1858) II. ix. 340 The language of the Roman see had been inconsistent, but the actions of it had been always uniform.
- 1860 ABP. W. THOMSON *Outl. Laws of Thought* (ed. 5) §84. 150 Inconsistent opposition lies between any two affirmative judgments which cannot be correct together, but may be false together.

(Hide quotations)

4. Of a person: Not consistent in thought or action.

a. Const. *with*, †rarely *to* (oneself, one's principles, etc.). [Thesaurus »](#)

- 1709 J. STRYPE *Ann. Reformation* viii. 114 Many of these accused them to the Queen..as Men that were inconsistent to themselves.
- 1709 R. STEELE *Tatler* No. 7. 1 Man is a Creature very inconsistent with himself.
- 1771 'JUNIUS' *Stat Nominis Umbra* (1772) II. xlviii. 181 You..are inconsistent with your own principles.
- 1887 T. FOWLER *Elem. Deduct. Logic* (ed. 9) Examples 174 You are inconsistent with yourself.

(Hide quotations)

b. absol. Acting in a way at variance with one's professed principles, or with one's conduct at another time.

1742 E. YOUNG *Complaint* II. 113 Ah! how unjust to nature, and himself, Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man!

1863 R. WHATELY *Misc. Remains* (1864) 99 A man is..properly called inconsistent whose opinions or practices are at any one time at variance with each other; in short, who holds at once a proposition and its contradictory.

1875 B. JOWETT tr. Plato *Dialogues* (ed. 2) IV. 11 Nor..in speaking of God both in the masculine and neuter gender, did he [Plato] seem to himself inconsistent.

(Hide quotations)

B. n. (pl.)

Things, statements, etc. which are inconsistent with each other or with something else.

Thesaurus »

1652 J. GAULE *Πως-μavtia* 147 Necessity and contingency have always been held as contraries and inconsistent.

1655 T. FULLER *Church-hist. Brit.* I. 10 As for other inconsistent with truth..they prove not that this whole Story should be refused, but refined.

1864 F. C. BOWEN *Treat. Logic* vi. 169 Two Inconsistent..cannot both be true.

(Hide quotations)

[Back to top](#)

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Copyright © 2014 Oxford University Press . All rights reserved. | [Privacy policy](#) and [legal notice](#) | [Credits](#)

Your access is brought to you by:
Admin. Office%2C US Courts
[Log out](#)